



1025 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 1120
Washington, DC 20005
ParkinsonsAction.org
info@ParkinsonsAction.org
202-638-4101 | 800-850-4726

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February 25, 2015

The Honorable Ben Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cardin and Collins,

Thank you for your leadership on issues important to the 500,000 to 1.5 million Americans living with Parkinson's disease. I write on behalf of the Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) in strong support for the *Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act*, which permanently repeals the arbitrary caps imposed on physical therapy, speech-language pathology combined and occupational therapy services.

PAN is the unified voice of the Parkinson's community advocating for better treatments and a cure. In partnership with other Parkinson's organizations and our powerful grassroots network, we educate the public and government leaders on better policies for research and improved quality of life for Americans living with Parkinson's, for whom there is no treatment available that slows, reverses, or prevents progression.

Medicare therapy caps are barriers for people with Parkinson's disease who need physical, occupational, and speech-language therapy services to maintain independence and improving quality of life. A permanent repeal of the therapy caps means that people with Parkinson's and other chronic diseases will not have to cease medically necessary therapy services because of arbitrary limits. For so many, these services provide the only and most effective option to sustain the daily functions, including walking, talking, and eating, that we often take for granted. While there is an exceptions process designed to provide a pathway for medically necessary therapy, it has been a burden on providers and is insufficient to protect access to care.

The Parkinson's community is grateful for this bipartisan effort to finally repeal the arbitrary caps to ensure continued access to medically necessary services. We commend your commitment to ending the cycle of short-term fixes to this issue and look forward to working with you to include a permanent repeal of the therapy caps in any package to reform the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate.

Thank you, and please feel free to contact Jennifer Sheridan Palute, director of policy, with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Thompson".

Ted Thompson, J.D.
Chief Executive Officer
Parkinson's Action Network